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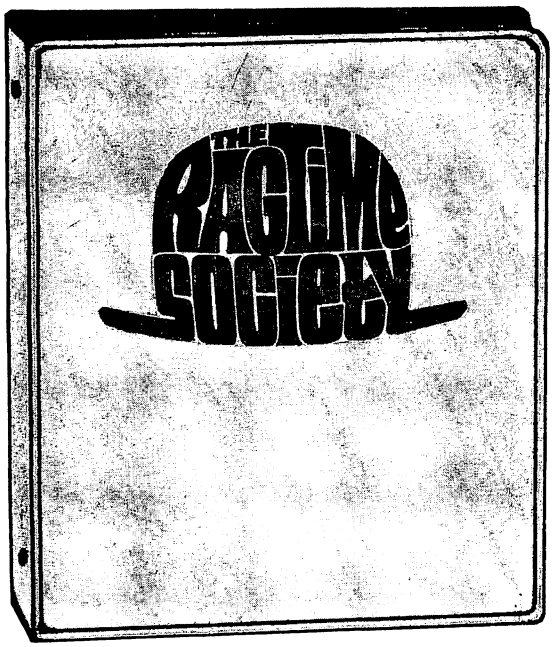

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RAGTIME...
UNDER YOUR HAT

THE RAGTIME SOCIETY

is a non-profit organization for people interested in Ragtime music. Services include the publication of this magazine; which is concerned with all phases of classic Ragtime, the re-printing of sheet music, and maintaining a stock of hard to find folios and books concerned with Ragtime. THE RAGTIME SOCIETY also records on its own label, bringing to its members performances of old and new Ragtime.

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Here we are, it's September and THE RAGTIME SOCIETY "BASH" is drawing nearer. We urge you to let us know at your earliest convenience whether you are planning on attending. Please fill out the coupon enclosed with this newsletter and mail it to us with your remittance. Deadline is September 30 so DO IT NOW!

* * * * * * * * * *

John Arpin and Baron McCormick reported that they spent a most enjoyable time in Buffalo at the Q-R-S Piano Roll factory. They were all excited about a machine that has been dormant for close to 40 years. Ramsi Tick, head of Q-R-S, has had the machine in question rebuilt. It's a contraption that marks a blank paper roll as the pianist performs. John's excitement was well founded as it turned out that he became the first pianist to make a roll on this machine since Fats Waller in 1931. Waller always was a tough act to follow! Mr. Tick has mentioned that with this particular machine it will be possible to issue some hand-played rolls cut by John in the not too distant future. However, it will be a while, as every roll done at the present time has to be cut by hand. It's economically unsound to do rolls in this manner but they're working on some refinements at Q-R-S.

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SEE YOU AT THE BASH ! ! ! !

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RECORD REVIEW

by
TEX
WYNDHAM

Origin OJL-16 'Ragged Piano Classics'

Selections, Artists and Year of Recording:

'Dew Drop Alley Stomp', Sugar Underwood (1927)
'Lonesome Road Blues', Smith and Irvine (1932)
'Louisiana Glide', Blind Leroy Garnett (1929)
'Dusting The Keys', Blythe and Burton (1928)
'Easy Drag' and 'Avenue Strut', Herve Duerson (1929)
'Jelly Roll Stomp', Frank Melrose (1929)
'West Dallas Drag No. 2', Rob Cooper (1935)
'Bow To Your Papa', Blythe and Clark (1931)
'Everybody's Rag'. Alonzo Yancey (1943)
'Spirit Of '49 Rag', George H. Tremer (1927)
'Mixed Up Rag', Will Ezell (1928)
'Mississippi Shivers', Sidney Williams (1927)
'Modulation', Clarence Jones (1923)

Available from: Origin Jazz Library, P. O. Box 863, Berkeley, California.

This album ressurrects some rare and very enjoyable piano work by a number of virtually forgotten pianists. Although the sound quality of the recordings is generally subject to the limitations normally found on reissues of this type - material recorded mostly in the twenties on obscure labels - the high quality and bouyant spirit of the music more than compensate for this problem.

First up is Sugar Underwood, a pianist whose total recorded output apparently consists of two sides cut in Savannah, Georgia on August 23, 1927. It's a pity we don't have more because, judging from the fantastic performance on 'Dew Drop Alley Stomp', he could sure play piano. Taken at top speed, this multi-strain tune is performed with such a fancy arrangement that I was almost tempted to conclude that the LP was mislabeled and that I was really listening to one of the duet sides.

Next is a duet, performed in the 'country' type of ragtime - basic chords, simple melodic strains, but a happy, stomping and raggedy sound. This leads into 'Louisiana Glide', one of two sides which comprise the discography of Blind Leroy Garnett. He is quite reminiscent of Jelly Roll Morton in approach, but perhaps with a little busier style, particularly in the left hand, where he uses a lot of grace notes.

The next track includes about the most famous musician on the LP, Jimmy Blythe, a shadowy and near legendary pianist who appears on a number of famous small-band sides from the twenties with many of the greatest names in traditional jazz. Here he performs duets with first, W. E. Burton and then James Clark. Both 'Dusting The Keys' and 'Bow To Your Papa' are bright, stomping numbers. The first tune has some delightful two-handed treble breaks, and both feature the light, driving Blythe left hand, which has a characteristic use of the loud pedal to sustain the first beat in the bar.

Herve Duerson's two tracks indicate that he probably preferred to play boogie rather than stride piano. 'Easy Drag' is taken at a medium tempo stride, and includes

a lot of piano 'tricks', but is a bit labored in execution. On the other hand, 'Avenue Strut', which is based entirely on the twelve-bar blues pattern common to boogie-woogie, has Duerson more in command of his material and is a generally satisfying performance.

Kansas City Frank Melrose, one of the few white pianist to master the Negro jazz style during the twenties, turns in a relaxed, but still driving performance with a back-room, jazzy feeling to it. Rob Cooper concentrates on the 12-bar blues form, and though he does it crisply enough, his track tends to get repetitious. Alonzo Yancey's track, done in a rent-party stride style, generally suffers from sloppy execution. 'Spirit Of '49 Rag', despite the hokum introduced by a kazoo solo and some wierd sound effects on some of the breaks, is good fun all the way through and contains some fine ragtime piano by George H. Tremer.

Another familiar name to jazz fans may be Will Ezell, who made a number of piano solos during the twenties and was generally a part of the South Side Chicago jazz scene. His track on this LP is ' Mixed Up Rag', a tune which starts out much like the Original Dixieland Jazz Band's 'Sensation Rag', but then goes its own way. Unfortunately, the performance is a bit plodding, and not up to his best work.

Sidney Williams' 'Mississippi Shivers' is the only selection on the LP which doesn't come very close to being ragtime. Taken at a rather slow tempo, it starts out as a blues and ends up as something of a ballad. However, there's nothing wrong with the track, and it provides some good contrast.

Finally, 'Modulation', by Clarence Jones, is a bright, crisp, raggedy number that brings the LP to a stomping close. This is the closest tune to a St. Louis style rag on the LP, but don't let that lead you to believe that this LP is not for ragtimers. Most of these tunes fall somewhere in between ragtime and jazz- they are multi-strain tunes, with a reasonable formal structure, played with a stride left hand. On the other hand, they are less formalized compositions than typical rags, with an emphasis on driving, bright piano that's played with both good humor and guts. For lack of any other term, I tend to think of this type of piano as 'barrelhouse' piano, and it is thoroughly enjoyable style.

Unfortunately, the liner notes (perhaps for lack of information about the artists) attempt to give a brief lecture on the structure and development of ragtime in an oversimplified manner that I tend to regard as more misleading than informative. However, with any LP, the music's the thing, and this one gives you a chance to hear some rare, well-played, light-hearted piano solos that should appeal to most ragtimers, particularly those who lean toward ragtime that isn't highly structured.

As a footnote to this review, this LP has a companion volume, OJL-15, called 'Rugged Piano Classics". It is in much the same vein, except that the performances concentrate almost entirely on the twelve-bar blues form. Thus, it does not have as direct an appeal to ragtimers - although I suspect that most people who like one of these LPs will like the other also.

This Article by Sidney Fields is reprinted from the New York Daily News May 7th, 1970.

THE RAGTIME KID

His card reads, "Robert Marks" and under his name, "On Ragtime Piano. Available for Personal Appearances."

He's 15, big, plump, pleasant and a student of the piano for 11 years. About four years ago he became disenchanted with the current state of musical composition and dug into the books to find out what went before the din of raucous protest. He discovered ragtime and has since become one of its articulate propagandists and performers.

"So few people know about its beautiful melodies and clever counterpoint," said Bob the other day. "That's too bad because it's really the first music about which America can say, "This is our own thing."

He can and does play any other kind of music, but won't play rock. He's exhibited his talent for classic ragtime on a couple of radio shows with his friend Max Morath, the man who may yet make it popular. Bob has also appeared on WPIX with Jack McCarthy and Joe Bolton and on WNBC-TV's "Someone New" with Leon Bibb, And he's due on two radio shows; John Wingate over WOR and Ruth Jacobs on WEVD.

In his school, Parson Junior High in Queens, where he's now a 9th grader, Bob has staged about a dozen assembly programs, playing and talking about ragtime, properly costumed in red vest, wing collar, striped shirt, or a noisy blazer. He has four such costumes, The headgear for all of them is a skimmer.

GRANNY HIS COSTUMER

"My grandmother makes them," Bob said. "The costumes not the skimmer. She's been making them for four years. Today they're in fashion."

Every night at 10, Bob acalls his grandparents and plays some ragtime for them over the telephone. Grandpa applauds everything he plays but grand ma is a bit more critical, points out his flaws, tells him when to slow down or speed it up.

"She knows," said Bob. "She once played in a women's symphony orchestra in Vienna."

They're his mother's parents. They got away from Hilter. His father's parents and grandparents didn't.

His father is a salesmanager for a firm that exports tractors and bulldozers Neither his father, mother or sister, Lori, 11 play any instrument. Bob was three years old when he was picking out the tunes on a miniature, three octave piano. At four he asked to be taught.

"It was always voluntary," Bob said. "I had to ask for it. My grandmother would show me the notes when I started my first lessons. When I got into ragtime my parents didn't care for it much. It takes a lot of practice, so I guess that's why they got tired of hearing it."

He'll have to get his own room if that's his future.

"It can't be a career. Not ragtime. No I don't know what I'll do beyond getting into high school.

Maybe in music and Art or the Performing Arts. I live day by day."

Two years ago Bob went to see and hear Max Morath, the best known exponent of ragtime, at the Jan Hus Playhouse and wrote down the titles of all the songs Morath played. Bob bought the music and also bought Morath's "100 Ragtime Classics", which cost $15, all paid for with his own money. Last summer he was a typist and mail room boy. This summer he will be the music director of coed camp.

"I'll have my own private room and be paid $200," Bob boasted.

Before he saw Morath's second show he phoned him. "Morath spoke to me for 90 minutes," Bob said, still astonished at such kindness, "He told me about the two ragtime societies and answered a lot of questions."

Bob promptly joined both societies, The Ragtime Society, based in Toronto, Canada, and the Maple Leaf Club in Los Angeles. "The Maple Leaf Rag" is a classic written by Scott Joplin, the Texas Negro who is considered the father of ragtime. "Rag' sold 2 million copies of sheet music and was dedicated to the preservation of ragtime.

"Joplin and James Scott of Sedalia, Mo., and Joseph Lamb, of Brooklyn, were the big men of ragtime." Bob said.

From Morath Bob also learned about John Arpin, a Canadian who plays beautiful classic ragtime on a big grand piano, not the usual upright with the top off it. And he learned about an old-timer named Eubie Blake, now 87, who comes out of semi-retirement occasionally. Blake never misses the pilgrimage to Toronto to play at the annual meeting of the Ragtime Society.

"Ragtime began after the Civil War." Bob said. "It reached its golden age between 1897 and 1917. Most Americans couldn't play it on the piano. Tin Pan Alley introduced easy-to-play new rags but took the melody out of it and made honky tonk music. Joplin died in 1917 and so did ragtime."

But Morath insists there's a new interest in it because people are collecting Tiffany glass and flocked wall paper and everything associated with the turn of the century.

"Maybe ragtime will be rediscovered," Bob said hopefully. "Classic ragtime, not honky tonk."

Our thanks to Robert Marks for this article. He also pointed out to us its odd error but the message is clear - Ragtime is good music. -Ed.

The following article is taken from the Ellensburg Daily Record Thurs. June 25, 1970

BOB DARCH UNEARTHS TREASURES

Bob Darch has found a gold mine on Main Street.

The rag time piano player now booked at the Holiday's Caboose Room has been searching the country over for rag time sheet music published between 1896 and 1919. He knew he was getting close to a real strike when he learned Ellensburg had not had a major fire since 1889.

Sure enough! Old copies turned up at Cassie's Bargain House of Antiques, and more sheet music of old time rag was found at St. Vincent de Paul. Fire has frequently destroyed such a perishable product.

Unearthing old time piano arrangements is not new for Darch who is a recognized authority on authentic rag. He now has over 10,000 sheets of rag time music, and does a lot of music for TV and films.

"The rag time piano music heard tinkling in the background of those western movies when the good guy saunters up the steps of the saloon, is sometimes my music, and sometimes me playing the piano." he said.

Being a devotee of rag, Bob Darch has picked up some interesting facts on the subject. The first piece of music to actually bear the name "rag" was by William Krell, and called Mississippi Rag.

Rag began in Missouri, Darch says, and the most popular rag time tune in the 19th Century probably was Maple Leaf Rag written in Sedalia, Mo. Probably the most popular rag time number at the end of the rag time era (1919, when Dixie Land Jazz took over) was Tiger Rag written in 1917.

Darch believes the greatest rag time song was written by Irving Berlin in 1910 - 'Alexander's Rag Time Band.' George Gershwin wrote 'Rialto Ripple Rag'; Sigmund Romberg's 'Leg of Mutton Rag' and 'Some Smoke', and Claude Debussy's 'Golliwogs Cakewalk' are all ragtime.

Darch was an early protege of Gene Turpin, the black, ragtime pianist at the New York Hippodrome. He forsook music for education and graduated as a civil engineer from the university of Arizona.

He left the armed forces as a Lt. Colonel in 1952, and began pursuing his real love. Between the time he played the Red Dog Saloon in Alaska and his current booking at the Holiday, he has covered this country, Mexico, Venezuela, and the Bahamas.

"I love it," said Darch of his rag time career. "I have met more interesting people doing this than I ever did with the Corp. of Engineers."

REPRINT CLUB NEWS

BY JOHN ARPIN

SECOND MAILOUT

That's A Plenty 1914 (Lew Pollack) Joseph Morris Music Company
Black Beauty Rag 1910 (Jean Schwartz) Jerome Remick
Father Knickerbocker 1907 (Edwin E. Wilson) Joseph Stern
Society Rag 1912 (Nat Johnson) Forster Music - Chicago
French Pastry Rag 1914 (Les Copeland) Remick
Crash ! ! ! 1914 (Van and Schenck) W. Rossiter - Chicago

THIRD MAILOUT

Golden Spider 1910 (Chas. L. Johnson) Vandersloot (Williamsport)
Knick Knocks Rag 1915 (Phil Schwartz) Sam Fox
Take Me Out To Lakeside 1914 (James Scott - Ida Miller) Song - Ball Music
Les Copeland's 38th Street Rag 1913 (Les Copeland) Watson, Berlin and Snyder
Clover Blossom Rag 1910 (Fred Heltman) Fred Heltman
Trilby Rag 1915 (Carey Morgan) Joseph W. Stern.

Listed above are the two most recent mailouts in the Reprint Club (Chapter Vl), Second Mailout was posted some time ago while the third mailout is now being printed for mailing mid- September. Space does not permit detailed discussions about all of the above rags. There are some, however, which warrant more than just a mention. "That's A'Plenty" is of much interest since nearly every traditional band includes it in their repertoire. The rest of this particular mailout is of more than average quality and perhaps constitutes rags of greater than moderate difficulty to perform.

Re· Mailout 3, Golden Spider at last is being reprinted mostly due to the fact that many members have asked about it. The little gem here could well be the song "Take Me Out to Lakeside" by James Scott with words by Ida Miller. Normally, songs are not reprinted, but in this case we feel a most difficult composition to obtain and a composer of the importance of Scott warrants the reprinting. "Trilby Rag"by Carey Morgan who also collaborated with Eubie Blake, on "Bugle Call Rag" has some pleasant moments. "Knick Knocks Rag" is rather original in its opening strain . Anyone know whether Phil Schwartz is a relative of Jean Schwartz - composer of many songs and instrumentals (see Black Beauty Rag"- 2nd mailout)? "Clover Blossom Rag"and Les Copeland's"38th Street Rag'are recent additions the Ragtime Society library. It's the first time we've seen either of them and we know you'll enjoy owning a copy.

Keep smilin' and rag that scale !

IMPORTANT

" BASH" '70

As a result of several complications no facilities are to be provided this year for large tape recorders at the "BASH" on October 24th.

SOUNDS FAMILIAR

ROGER HANKINS

THOSE BILL BAILEY SONGS

PART 1 CLASSIC BALLAD STRUCTURE

Bill Bailey is one of the most contradictory figures in American popular music. At one and the same time he is considered to be a real person, a myth or a combination of the two. He is a complex individual and yet his adventures are celebrated in one of the most direct and uncomplicated song forms ever devised .. .. the ragtime song. Subtlety has no place in a ragtime song. Meanings and inferences are made as plain as they can possibly be. But Bill Bailey himself remains a mystery.

The man is remembered today because of one outstanding song, 'Bill Bailey Won't You Please Come Home'. The chorus of this song is so popular and seems to be so complete in itself that the introductory verse is often omitted entirely. Not one person in ten thousand could hum the verse if requested. One edition of the song currently available at music stores contains a 16 bar verse, which is evidence of the disfavor the original verse has fallen into.

Most theories about the music have postulated the existence of a real Bill Bailey whose adventures inspired the songs. The real Bill Bailey is variously pictured as being anyone from a shiftless negro to a vaudeville entertainer. Forced to leave his apartment by his wife, he is supposed to have been befriended by Hughie Cannon, a song and dance man in vaudeville who gave him money and encouragement, and who was finally inspired to write a hit song about the incident.

These theories about a real life Bill Bailey explain nothing about the songs which bear his name and for all practical purposes can be ignored. His songs obviously belong to a much larger body of music whose origins are lost somewhere in negro folklore. If Bill Bailey is ever to be understood it will have to be in relation to this larger group of songs.

Max Morath in his Guide to Ragtime has given the best capsule summary of Bill Bailey; "A leading man in many a come back song and a mythical character of music worthy ofjoiningFrankie, Johnny, John Henry and Casey Jones." The Guide to Ragtime includes two Bill Bailey songs. The well known one plus what Max calls an answer song, 'I wonder why Bill Bailey don't come home.' This answer song is a good ragtime song, typical of its era. Yet strangely it is not a typical Bill Bailey song due to the fact that it is the only one of the genuine Bill Bailey songs that does not have a twelve bar verse. I t is these verses, taken collectively, which show that the origins of the Bill Bailey songs must have come from that larger body of songs which uses their particular 12 bar structure almost exclusively.

It is easy to pin point the exact inspiration of ' I Wonder Why Bill Bailey Don't Come Home.' The melody is lifted directly from an earlier Hughie Cannon

song 'I Hates To Get Up Early In the Morn.' (1901). The two bar breaks are filled in with snatches of 'Bill Bailey Wont' You Please Come Home' and an expression is borrowed from an earlier song by Cannon's principal partners John Queen and Walter Wilson. This answer song gives convincing evidence that the Bill Bailey songs were considered most effective when performed in the Cannon manner.

It is just as easy to pin point the exact inspiration of the songs composed by Hughie Cannon and his partners. Three of their songs are included in Ann Charters' Ragtime Songbook together with another Bill Bailey song by other writers. These four songs all use a twelve bar verse as an introduction to their ragtime choruses. The only other song in the Charters' collection to use a twelve bar theme is May Irwin's Bully song. The Bully, as will be seen, came from the same mold which produced Bill Bailey.

The use of their particular twelve bar verse makes the Bill Bailey songs unique among ragtime songs, and indeed unique among all songs everwhere. The twelve bar theme, under any form, was slow to curry popular favor and its consistent use in the Bill Bailey songs at the turn of the century was completely out of character with the other songs of the period. It was almost impossible to find examples of a twelve bar theme in our popular music during the first half decade of this century. Even when the 12 bar form ceased to be a novelty with the first publications of the Blues in 1912, the particular form associated with Bill Bailey remained in relative obscurity. This form was so rare that even such a comprehensive collection as found in the WC Handy, Abbe Niles 'Treasury of the Blues' contains only one example of it. This lone example is the verse of Spencer Williams' 'Banjo Blues.'

The structure of the Bill Bailey verses is based on a two bar line while that of the blues song is based completely on a slower moving four bar line, usually with a two bar break at the end of every line. This slower form is more in keeping with the tendency of the blues to dwell at length on each separate thought. The only other song form to use the precise 12 bar structure of the Bill Bailey songs is the folk ballad of the southern negro. It logically follows that Bill Bailey originated in the folk ballads of the negro and nowhere else.

There are two basic structures associated with the negro ballad. One is free and uninhibited while the other is classic in conception and standardized in performance. Both structures use and two bar line which is in keeping with the fast moving action of the ballad.

As a general rule the negro folk ballad tends towards a 12 bar framework. Each stanza contains four lines which take up 8 bars. In the non-classic form each stanza is brought to a close by repeating the fourth line, either once as in 'John Henry' thus giving each stanza a length of only ten bars, or else by playing around with the fourth line for as much as six bars which results in 14 bar stanza as in the negro version of 'Casey Jones.' This technique of ragging the fourth line is very effective when spread over many bars. The pendulum of the non-classic ballad structure swings anywhere from 10 to 14 bars and naturally settles into a twelve bar framework.

The classic ballad structure differs only in its treatment of the last four bars. It does not indulge in the free wheeling treatment of the fourth line. Instead it substitutes a composed tag-line chorus which it repeats without variation at the end

of every stanza. This composed chorus lends itself readily to the public entertainer who likes his product pre-packaged for popular consumption. The irregular stanza endings would be favored by the less classically minded private performer who plays only for his own enjoyment.

It is the classic structure of the negro folk ballad which is used in the Bill Bailey songs. The same classic structure is used in the two negro ballads most associated with Bill Bailey; 'Frankie and Johnny', and the 'Boll Weevil'. Both of these ballads deal with the two recurring themes of Bill Bailey 'done wrong' and 'come home'. Because the Bill Bailey songs were published first, it could be argued that their form inspired the ballads, but obviously the reverse was true. Being the product of a mostly illiterate people who left no written records, and who prided themselves in originality of performance, these ballads had to wait until such time as the white songwriters took an interest in them befor they could give published evidence of their existence. The use of their structure in the Bill Bailey songs is proof that these ballads were sung in their classic form at least as early as the turn of the century.

The essence of the classic folk ballad structure is contained in the eighth bar of each stanza where the tag-line chorus is inserted prematurely before the fourth line is finished. Using 'Frankie and Johnny' as a model, it is seen that the fifth line 'He was her man' begins immediately after the last word of the fourth line instead of waiting for three additional beats. This results in a rhythmic shifting of lines. The first four lines begin on the odd bar and finish on the even, while the last two lines begin on the even and finish on the odd.

All the Bill Bailey songs, with the one exception already noted, use this shifting of lines in the last four bars of their introductory verses. The two main Bill Bailey songs employ a variation of the classic structure similar to that which, in shortened form, is used in the six bar 'Ballad of Railroad Bill'. This character, a bad man, is not to be confused with Bill Bailey. His ballad contains the following typical stanza: Railroad Bill ___/ Railroad Bill ___/ He never worked and /He never will it's /Bad ___ Railroad / Bill ___ ___ ___ /. Only the words beginning with the letter B are accented, and they show how the emphasis shifts from the third beat to the first beat at the end of each stanza. One of the advantages of the two bar line is that it is capable of this 6 bar variation. Theoretically it would be possible to express the classic ballad structure in only three bars, substituting twelve beats in place of twelve bars. The accent would be on beats 1/3/5/7/8/10.

Not all modern arrangements of these ballads agree on the use of the classic structure but they do agree that it was a rare form and not applicable to most ballads. It is a monotonous form when repeated endlessly. It has none of the freedom associated with the mor irregular ballads such as Casey Jones, and its one rhythmic shift is insignificant when compared to the fourth theme of Joplin's Maple Leaf Rag which changes rhythmic figures with every bar. But rhythmic excitement is not the function of a ballad structure. It is supposed to supply the musical background only for along, almost unending story. One of the highlights of the Bill Bailey songs is the manner in which they vary the classic structure, such as inserting a four bar line between pairs of two bar lines. They can be counted on to exploit whatever dynamic possibilities exist in this simple form.

The classic ballad structure is used so seldom that it may be thought of as a musical device, a sort of leitmotif, representing that overall image of which Bill Bailey

is only one small part. Everytime it is used, it is in connection with some wanderer looking for something, usually a home. In a few instances it represents some person being searched for, and in each instance that person is dispatched to another world when found. Frankie searches for Johnny, May Irwin searches for her Bully, Railroaddetectiveshunt down Railroad Bill. Tony rids himself of Delia.

The Bully song, copied down by Charles Trevathan in 1895 at May Irwin's request was published in 1896. This song should represent the first printed example of the classic folk ballad structure. It doesn't, but this may be considered the fault of Trevathan's arrangement. When the Bully song is compared with the ballad of the Boll Weevil it is immediately apparent that the same search theme was responsible for both ballads. Each song begins with the phrase "Have you heard" and each song begins the tag-line chorus with the words "lookin' for". It would seem that Trevathan was confused by the early appearance of the fifth line on the second beat of the eighth bar.

The first actual printed example of the classic Ballad structure so far as can be determined was in the verse of the Hughie Cannon-John Queen collaboration 'Just Because She Made Dem Goo-Goo Eyes'. (1900) This song was tremendously popular in its day, and may still be found in certain collections of Gay '90 Songs, notably that of M. M. Cole, Chicago. The story of this song concerns itself with a black minstrel player who leaves his traveling troupe to court a rich black lady with avowed intention of winning himself a home. The lady thows him down in a strange city where he is stranded in the cold with no money. He has to send a telespatch to his minstrel troupe in the hope that they'll give him his old job back.

Here, once again, the classic twelve bar structure revolves around the mythical wanderer searching for a home. This time he is a travelling entertainer. Later on as Bill Bailey he becomes a railroad man as well a displaced husband. The melody of Frankie and Johnny, some people say, was first used in a ballad called 'Baby In a Guinea-Blue Gown'. This song tells about a man who packs up and goes "way ovah yondah" to find his baby so he can set up a home life for himself.

The search for a home, or for some object of vengeance is inseparable from these early examples of the classic folk ballad structure. The conclusion is inescapable that Hughie Cannon heard southern negroes singing about such a wandering man, and was fascinated by this particular twelve bar pattern. Whether Cannon was the first to use Bill Bailey's name in song or whether he heard the negroes singing about a Bill Bailey lookin' for a home can only be conjectured. At any rate Bill Bailey, like the Boll Weevil, represents only one figure of the mythical wanderer who was wandering and searching in negro folklore long before Bill's name was used to identify him.

It is worth pointing out that Goo-Goo eyes has basically the same plot, in reverse, of a George M. Cohan song 'I guess I'll have to telegraph my baby' (1898) The chorus of the Cohan song has a lot of the spirited flavor and a similar hint of the pentatonic scale associated with "Bill Bailey Wont't You Please Come Home", but there is no way to fit George M's wanderer into the Bill Bailey mold. He doesn't use a twelve bar pattern, classic or otherwise.

Hughie Cannon wrote another wanderer song in 1901, 'You Needn't Come Home'. This song is so close to the Bill Bailey image of 'Ain't Dat A Shame' that it may properly be considered a Bill Bailey song. The announcement of departure "I'm gwine to take

a stroll" has the same economy of expression as the Queen-Wilson version "Our dream of love is past". This song is worth a doublelook because it contains not one, but two examples of the classic ballad structure. There is a lot more rhythmic variety in this particular arrangement of the verse where both the second and fourthl lines are begun prematurely. Yet they don't detract from the surprise element of the fifth line since they begin on a later beat.

The use of a 12 bar chorus in this song is especially noteworthy. Rare as a 12 bar verse was in the first few years of this century, a 12 bar chorus was even rarer. Most important of all, for present purposes, this song is a ballad. It tells a story, has fast moving action, and though perhaps not as impersonal as most ballads, it is not untypical. A few negro ballads have traditionally employed a first person presentation.

Although Hughie Cannon didn't mention Bill Bailey by name, it appears likely that he had the figure of Bill in mind when he wrote this ragtime ballad. It is possible that he and his colleagues were the first to use the name Bill Bailey in song, but it appears more likely that the negroes were the first, especially since they had already inspired Cannon to write about another wanderer in his G00-Goo Eyes song. How the Southern negro first started singing about a Bill Bailey will be the subject of much speculation in the next chapter of this article.

(Next· Part 2 - Universal Symbols)

LETTERS

Letters are welcome from members. We will attempt to answer questions pertaining to ragtime in this column. Full address of correspondent will be printed unless requested otherwise.

Would appreciate it if you'd mention in the next Ragtimer that Eubie Blake's biography is in the process of being written by Lawrence Carter of Detroit, a long-time friend of Eubie's and an accomplished writer who has a regular column in the Detroit News. I've offered to help Mr. Carter prepare an index or appendix which will list all known Eubie Blake recordings and I can use any information your readers may have not known to me at present. I'm pretty well versed on Eubie's piano roll output (in fact, I just discovered that seven rolls played by him were issued on the very obscure Artrio-Angelus label, a firm from Meriden, Connecticut. There are no rags in the titles as such, but still it represents Eubie as he was playing in about 1919.) In terms of his 78's, I would need any information not shown in the record-collector's guide JAZZ RECORDS - 1897 - 1942 by Brian Rust and BLUES AND GOSPEL RECORDS in which many of his blues accompaniments are listed. If readers have 78's by Eubie but don't have the above two books to check whether or not they're listed, send the info along anyway.

One area of Eubie's recording activity I'd like to include is a listing of the tunes that various people have on private tape recordings, from past Toronto parties and Ragtime

Bashes. It will suffice to have the date of the performance, a list of the tunes Eubie plays, the location (city and address, if known) and the fact that the material is on private tapes. I have a number of things Eubie recorded at my home in 1967 which fall into this category. It is not available for copying or for issue without Eubie's permission, but I feel as an archivist that this information belongs in a list of his entire recorded output.

You'll also be interest to know that a color video tape session lasting four and one half hours was made recently in Philadelphia on education TV and a one hour telecast over nationwide (USA and least) ETV is scheduled for Sunday, September 6th, 1970. Watch for it ! It's Eubie all the way, singing and playing with Max Morath as host.

Thanks in advance for your help. All those who contribute helpful information on Eubie's recordings will be credited accordingly, in the book.

Sincerely,
Michael Montgomery,
18315 Santa Barbara
DETROIT, Michigan 48221.

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Received the May-June Ragtimer and "sure" enjoyed its contents.
I always enjoy Tex Wyndham's reviews, criticisms and comments on new LP's. He really deserves a lot of praise for his efforts.

He reviewed Max Morath's recordings in this issue and to my surprise, I learned that I do not have all of the LPs he recorded. Wyndham mentioned the label Talking Machine TM-4 "Music for Moochers, Gold Diggers and Cattle Rustlers." I received this recording about a month ago under the label Barbary Coast Records. Los Angeles. The label number is BC 33004S. The title is the same as above, did this company change hands?

I think that Max Morath is foremost among the leaders in the revival of interest in Ragtime. It was in his folio of 100 ragtime numbers that I found most of my most wanted numbers which were heretofore unobtainable. He also informed me about your Ragtime Society. I do hope that he will be present at your next Ragtime Bash in October and also, I hope that Donald Ashwander will be present.

My wife and I are planning to be present at this forthcoming event in October, although it will mean that I will lose one or two days work.

I noted that Columbia CL-1789 "Mother of Stride Piano" by James P. Johnson is difficult to obtain, might I suggest that the following company might also have a copy of it:

Southland Records Distributors,
291 Spinnaker Street,
Orange, California, 92668.

I have received several rare albums from them, one of these hard to get LPs which is not pressed anymore is "Ragtime, A Recorded Documentary." 1899-1929. Piedmont PLP13158. They still have a few LPs left. The following are the recordings.

Date	Selection	Performer
3/5/99	Negro March	Messrs. Cullen & Collins
6/6/99	Whistling Rufus	Members of Sousa's Band
12/14/99	Cupid's Arrow	Stuber & Neaser
1/8/00	Sounds from Africa	Vess L. Ossman
1/8/00	Happy Go Lucky	" "
1/8/00	Ethiopian Mardi Grass	" "
Circa 8/01	Epler's Whiskers	Columbia Orchestra
" 9/01	Every Darky had a Raglan On.	Arthur Collins
" 8/02	Bill Bailey won't you please come home.	Dan W. Quinn
10/7/02	Creole Bells	Vess L. Ossman
4/10/05	Cakewalk in the Sky	Victor Dance Orchestra
1/24/06	Dixie Girl	Ossman - Dudley Iris
1/24/06	St. Louis Tickle	" "
Circa 3/07	Maple Leaf Rag	Vess L. Ossman
" 4/5/18	Blaze Away	Mike Bernard
" 6/23	Whippin' the Keys	Sam Goold
1/19/25	Nightingale Ray Blues	Hitch's Happy Harmonists
2/15/28	Easy Winner	Nap Hayes & Matthew Prate
C. 4/15/29	At A Georgia Camp Meeting	Leake County Revelers

Sylvester "Vess" L. Ossman was known as the banjo king of his time. Nine of the above nineteen selections are banjo recordings. Also note that on Side 2 Blaze Away was recorded by Mike Bernard. I am sure that very few of his recordings exist today. To be sure the LP contains a certain amount of surface noise and Side 1 certainly lacks quality but please note when recorded. In my opinion this LP is a true documentary and should give one a fairly good idea of how the numbers were played. I am proud to have a selection by Bernard.

I also noted that "Brittwood Rag" and "Baltimore Todalo" are published. This is good news indeed. However, what is the name and address of the publisher so that the rest of us can obtain these numbers.

I have a copy of the "Red Slipper Rag" by Glen Rowell. He also recorded it. Unfortunately I do not have the recording.

Sure hope to get a copy of "Golden Spider Rag" from you real soon.

RUSSELL STETTLER.

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.... I am putting out six of my Ragtime numbers in Book form. I have my own publishing house - Titled·

"Eubie Blake Music"
284A Stuyvesant Avenue,
BROOKLYN, N. Y.

Sincerely,
Eubie Blake,

ED : When the books are ready we will see about getting a supply for our members.

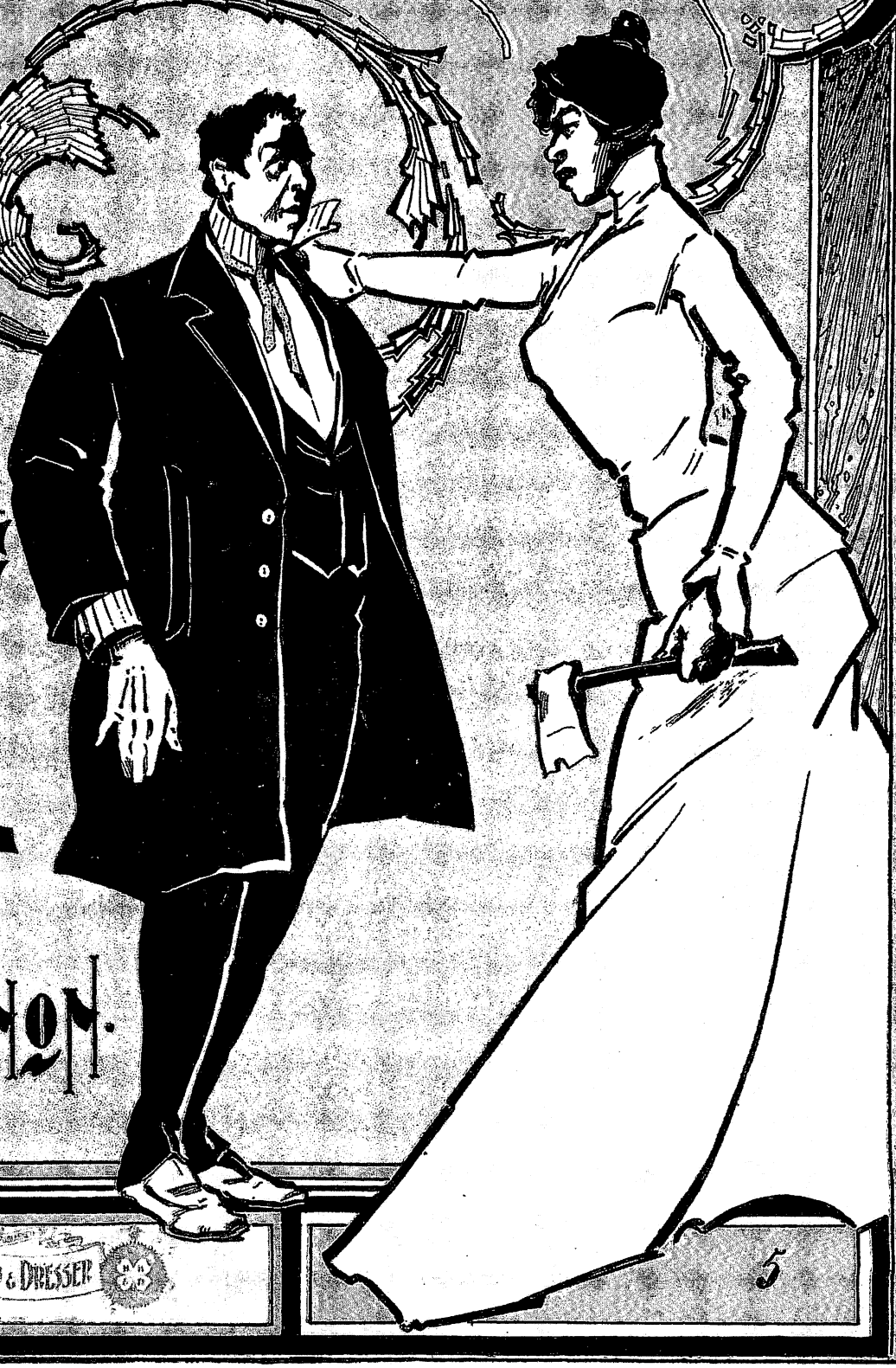
SOMETHING DOING...

JOHN ARPIN	- at Mr.' Tony's Place 9. 00 p. m. to l. 00 a. m. in Toronto
BOB DURST	- at Cherry Creek Inn, Denver, starting Sept. 6th for 4 weeks.
GALE FOEHNER	- Last Chance Saloon, Rochester.
KEN MAYHERCY	- "Ragtime $ Bill" at the Inn, Steamboat Springs, Colo.
MIKE MONTGOMERY	- at the Dakota Inn, Rathskeller, Detroit, Friday nights
MAX MORATH	- on the road with his show "At The Turn of the Century"
CHARLIE RASCH & 'SISTER KATE' ROSS	- Friday and Saturdays at Vigio's supper club - Ypsilanti, Mich. - Sun. at Anchor Inn - Portage Lake
LOWELL SCHREYER	- at Michael's Gay 90s Restaurant, Mankato Minn. Sat. nights
TREBOR TICHENOR	- and the St. Louis Ragtimers can be hear on the - Goldenrod Showboat in St. Louis, Missouri.
PETER TURNER	- at Bird Cage, Cambridge, England.
TED WYNDHAM	- and the Red Lion Jazz Band; at The Surrey Restaurant. - 1100 Philadelphia Pike, Wilmington, Del.

PERFORMERS· Please keep us posted on your whereabouts and your schedule will appear in this column.

Sung with Immense Success by RAYMOND TEAL, with W. H. WEST'S Big Minstrel Jubilee.

You Need'nt Come Home



Words & Music
By
Hughie Cannon.

Howley, Haviland & Dresser
Chicago Music Publishing Co.
New York